



GEORGIA NEWS RELEASE

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SEPTEMBER 1 FORECAST TOBACCO & COTTON YIELDS DECREASE

Georgia had near normal temperatures for most of August, according to the USDA, NASS, Georgia Field Office. The dry June and July gave way to more frequent showers during August. Based on a survey of growers contacted around September 1, crop yields for peanuts remained the same as the August 1 survey, while corn showed a slight increase. Tobacco showed a rather significant decrease, while cotton and soybeans showed a slight decrease from August. Disease problems have been about normal for most crops. Condition of most crops has generally been fair most of the growing season.

Peanut production in Georgia is forecast at 1.44 billion pounds, compared with last year's 2.15 billion pounds. Planted and harvested acres remain the same as last month. Planted acres are at 580,000 and harvested acres at 575,000. Yields across Georgia's peanut belt are expected to average 2,500 pounds per acre, the same as last month and 370 pounds less than last year. Growers were just beginning to dig peanuts by the first of September. Spraying for insects and diseases continued throughout the month. As of September 3, 31 percent of the peanut crop was rated good to excellent, 39 percent was rated fair, and 30 percent was rated poor to very poor.

Georgia's 2006 **cotton** crop is forecast to average 614 pounds of lint per harvested acre, 18 pounds less than last month, and 235 pounds less than last year. Acreage expected to be harvested this fall is estimated at 1,330,000 acres, the same as last month, but 120,000 acres more than last year. Production is estimated at 1.70 million bales, 21 percent less than last year's 2.14 million bales. Cotton has been hurt by the hot and dry summer conditions. As of September 3, 24 percent of the cotton crop was rated good to excellent, 32 percent was rated fair, and 44 percent was rated poor to very poor.

Tobacco yields for 2006 are expected to average 1,950 pounds per acre, 150 pounds less than last month, but 215 pounds more than last year. Acreage harvested is expected to be 18,000 acres, 2,000 acres more than last year. This puts potential production at 35.1 million pounds for the year 2006, 26 percent more than in 2005. Tobacco has suffered due to dry conditions and Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus. As of September 3, 92 percent of the crop had been harvested, slightly behind normal.

Corn yield for 2006 is expected to average 104 bushels per harvested acre, 2 bushels above last month, but 25 bushels per acre below last year. If this yield is realized, it will be the lowest since 1999. Georgia's total corn production is expected to total 25.0 million bushels from 240,000 acres harvested for grain. Production is down 16 percent from last year. Dry summer time growing conditions have contributed to the lower than normal yields. The crop condition for corn was rated 30 percent good to excellent, 30 percent fair and 42 percent poor to very poor. The corn for grain harvest is ahead of normal with 66 percent of the crop harvested by September 3. This harvest progress compares with 56 percent for the 5-year average.

Soybean yields in Georgia are forecast at 24 bushels per harvested acre. If this yield is realized, it will be the lowest since 2002. The dry growing conditions have reduced yields. Production is forecast at 3.60 million bushels, down significantly from the 4.55 million bushels last year. Harvested acres are estimated at 150,000, the same as last month and down 25,000 from last year's 175,000 acres.

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U.S. HIGHLIGHTS
CORN PRODUCTION UP 1 PERCENT FROM AUGUST FORECAST
SOYBEAN PRODUCTION UP 6 PERCENT
COTTON PRODUCTION DOWN SLIGHTLY

Corn production is forecast at 11.1 billion bushels, up 1 percent from last month and fractionally above 2005. Based on conditions as of September 1, yields are expected to average 154.7 bushels per acre, up 2.5 bushels from August and 6.8 bushels from last year. If realized, yield and production would be the second largest on record, behind 2004. Forecast yields are higher than August across the northern Great Plains and western Corn Belt as moderate to heavy precipitation during the month improved soil moisture levels and crop conditions. Expected yields across the eastern Corn Belt are unchanged from last month. Farmers expect to harvest 71.8 million acres of corn for grain, down 250,000 acres from August and down 4 percent from 2005.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.09 billion bushels, up 6 percent from the August forecast and up slightly from the 2005 crop. If realized, this would be the second highest production on record. Based on September 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 41.8 bushels per acre, up 2.2 bushels from August but down 1.5 bushels from last year's record high yield. Compared with last month, yields are forecast higher across the Corn Belt and most of the northern and central Great Plains. Near or above normal moisture in those areas during August improved crop conditions. In contrast, yields are down or unchanged from the August 1 forecast across the Gulf Coast States and Atlantic Coast States, with the exception of South Carolina.

All cotton production is forecast at 20.3 million 480-pound bales, down slightly from last month and down 15 percent from last year's record high production. Yield is expected to average 762 pounds per acre, down 3 pounds from last month and down 69 pounds from last year. The September harvested area is expected to total 12.8 million acres, virtually unchanged from last month but down 7 percent from last year. Lower production forecasts from last month in the Southeast and California were partially offset by higher production in the Southwest and Texas.

Peanut production is forecast at 3.20 billion pounds, down 34 percent from last year's crop and down 2 percent from last month. If realized, this would be the lowest production since 1980. Planted area was revised to 1.24 million acres, down 2 percent from the August estimate and down 25 percent from last year. Based on administrative information, Alabama, North Carolina, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas planted fewer acres than previously estimated, while Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia planted more acreage. Area for harvest is expected to total 1.21 million acres, down 2 percent from August and down 26 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 2,640 pounds per acre, down 5 pounds from last month and down 320 pounds from 2005. Production in the Southeast States (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina) is expected to total 2.23 billion pounds, down 1 percent from August and down 34 percent from last year's level. Planted area, at 946,000 acres, is down 1 percent from last month and down 22 percent from 2005. Expected acreage for harvest, at 924,000, is down 1 percent from August and down 23 percent from 2005. Yields in the region are expected to average 2,416 pounds per acre, 6 pounds above last month but 410 pounds below 2005. Lack of precipitation and above normal temperatures in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia have caused crop condition to drop sharply from last year. Peanuts in some areas of the Southeast have shown poor pod maturity, burnt pegs, and some insect damage as a result of the hot, dry weather. As of September 3, the percent of crop rated very poor to poor was 35 percent in Alabama, 55 percent in Florida, and 30 percent in Georgia, compared with 7 percent or less for the same time period last year.

Flue-cured tobacco production is expected to total 455 million pounds, 2 percent below last month but up 19 percent from 2005. Growers plan to harvest 208,100 acres in 2006, unchanged from the August forecast but 19 percent above a year ago. Yields are forecast to average 2,185 pounds per acre, 46 pounds below the last forecast but 3 pounds greater than the previous year. In North Carolina, the leading flue-cured tobacco producing State, production is forecast at 330 million pounds, 1 percent below the August 1 forecast but up 20 percent from last year. Growers in North Carolina expect to harvest 150,000 acres, unchanged since last month but up 22 percent from a year ago. Yields in North Carolina are expected to average 2,200 pounds per acre, down 30 pounds from the August forecast and 27 pounds below 2005. Growers in all flue-cured tobacco producing States except Virginia expect lower yields than a month ago. Tobacco is suffering in the southern States due to the extremely dry, hot weather for most of the season. However, heavy rains from tropical storm Ernesto had adverse affects especially in South Carolina. The rain there caused late maturing tobacco to ripen quickly. This left some growers unable to harvest this tobacco in a timely manner and left them struggling to make barn space to cure it.